

**IN THE UNITED STATES BANKRUPTCY COURT
FOR THE DISTRICT OF DELAWARE**

In re:

FRANCHISE GROUP, INC., *et al.*,¹

Debtors.

Chapter 11

Case No. 24-12480 (LSS)

(Jointly Administered)

Related D.I. 1715

**CERTIFICATE OF NO OBJECTION REGARDING
SIXTH MONTHLY FEE APPLICATION OF AKIN GUMP STRAUSS
HAUER & FELD LLP AS SPECIAL CO-COUNSEL ON BEHALF OF
AND AT THE SOLE DIRECTION OF THE INDEPENDENT DIRECTOR,
MICHAEL J. WARTELL, FOR THE PERIOD FROM
MAY 1, 2025 THROUGH AND INCLUDING JUNE 2, 2025**

I, Michael D. DeBaecke, an attorney with the law firm of Ashby & Geddes, P.A., Delaware special counsel to Michael J. Wartell, in his capacity as independent director and sole member of the conflicts committees of the boards of debtors Freedom VCM Interco, Inc. and Freedom VCM,

¹ The Debtors in these chapter 11 cases, along with the last four digits of their U.S. federal tax identification numbers, to the extent applicable, are Franchise Group, Inc. (1876), Freedom VCM Holdings, LLC (1225), Freedom VCM Interco Holdings, Inc. (2436), Freedom Receivables II, LLC (4066), Freedom VCM Receivables, Inc. (0028), Freedom VCM Interco, Inc. (3661), Freedom VCM, Inc. (3091), Franchise Group New Holdco, LLC (0444), American Freight FFO, LLC (5743), Franchise Group Acquisition TM, LLC (3068), Franchise Group Intermediate Holdco, LLC (1587), Franchise Group Intermediate L, LLC (9486), Franchise Group Newco Intermediate AF, LLC (8288), American Freight Group, LLC (2066), American Freight Holdings, LLC (8271), American Freight, LLC (5940), American Freight Management Company, LLC (1215), Franchise Group Intermediate S, LLC (5408), Franchise Group Newco S, LLC (1814), American Freight Franchising, LLC (1353), Home & Appliance Outlet, LLC (n/a), American Freight Outlet Stores, LLC (9573), American Freight Franchisor, LLC (2123), Franchise Group Intermediate B, LLC (7836), Buddy's Newco, LLC (5404), Buddy's Franchising and Licensing LLC (9968), Franchise Group Intermediate V, LLC (5958), Franchise Group Newco V, LLC (9746), Franchise Group Intermediate BHF, LLC (8260); Franchise Group Newco BHF, LLC (4123); Valor Acquisition, LLC (3490), Vitamin Shoppe Industries LLC (3785), Vitamin Shoppe Global, LLC (1168), Vitamin Shoppe Mariner, LLC (6298), Vitamin Shoppe Procurement Services, LLC (8021), Vitamin Shoppe Franchising, LLC (8271), Vitamin Shoppe Florida, LLC (6590), Betancourt Sports Nutrition, LLC (0470), Franchise Group Intermediate PSP, LLC (5965), Franchise Group Newco PSP, LLC (2323), PSP Midco, LLC (6507), Pet Supplies "Plus", LLC (5852), PSP Group, LLC (5944), PSP Service Newco, LLC (6414), WNW Franchising, LLC (9398), WNW Stores, LLC (n/a), PSP Stores, LLC (9049), PSP Franchising, LLC (4978), PSP Subco, LLC (6489), PSP Distribution, LLC (5242), Franchise Group Intermediate SL, LLC (2695), Franchise Group Newco SL, LLC (7697), and Educate, Inc. (5722). The Debtors' headquarters is located at 2371 Liberty Way, Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456.

Inc. (the “Retaining Debtors”) in the above-captioned bankruptcy cases of Franchise Group, Inc. and certain of its affiliates (collectively, the “Debtors”), hereby certify the following:

1. On July 10, 2025, Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP (“Akin”) filed the *Sixth Monthly Fee Application of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP as Special Co-Counsel on Behalf of and at the Sole Direction of the Independent Director, Michael J. Wartell, for the Period from May 1, 2025 through and including June 2, 2025* [D.I. 1715] (the “Sixth Monthly Fee Application”).

2. Pursuant to the *Notice of Sixth Monthly Fee Application*, any objections or responses were to be filed with the Court and properly served by July 31, 2025, at 4:00 p.m. (Eastern Time).

3. A review of the Court’s docket indicates that, as of this date, no formal responses or objections have been filed with respect to the Sixth Monthly Fee Application.²

WHEREFORE, pursuant to the *Order Establishing Procedures for Interim Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses for Professionals* [D.I. 353], the Debtors are authorized to pay Akin **\$294,908.00** in fees (80% of \$368,635.00) and **\$33,340.18** in expenses (100%), respectively, for a total of **\$328,248.18**, as requested in the Sixth Monthly Fee Application.

~Signature Page to Follow~

² On July 15, 2025, the Fee Examiner provided Akin with the *Fee Examiner’s Initial Report Regarding Third through Sixth Combined Monthly Fee Applications of Akin Gump Strauss Hauer & Feld LLP* (the “Fee Examiner’s Initial Report”). On July 25, 2025, Akin responded to the Fee Examiner’s Initial Report. Pursuant to the *Order Appointing Fee Examiner and Establishing Procedures for Consideration of Requested Fee Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses* [D.I. 747], absent an objection by any of the Notice Parties (as defined in the *Order Establishing Procedures for Interim Compensation and Reimbursement of Expenses of Professionals* [D.I. 353]), Akin is entitled to file a certificate of no objection. Because the Fee Examiner’s Initial Report is not an objection, Akin is entitled to file this certificate of no objection. For the avoidance of doubt, Akin intends to continue with efforts to resolve on a consensual basis the issues raised by the Fee Examiner in his draft Initial Report, including any issues pertaining to the Sixth Monthly Fee Application.

Dated: August 1, 2025
Wilmington, Delaware

ASHBY & GEDDES, P.A.

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-and-

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*Special Counsel on behalf of and at the sole direction
of Michael J. Wartell as the Independent Director and
sole member of the Conflicts Committee of the Board of
each of the Retaining Debtors*